



United States Department of the Interior
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

UTAH FIELD OFFICE
2369 WEST ORTON CIRCLE, SUITE 50
WEST VALLEY CITY, UTAH 84119

June 25, 2013

In Reply Refer To:

Paul Cowley, Resource and Planning Staff Officer
Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest
857 West 10600 South
South Jordan, UT 84095

RE: Mill Creek restoration project to support Bonneville cutthroat trout (*Oncorhynchus clarkii utah*)
and other native fish in Salt Lake County, Utah

Dear Mr. Cowley:

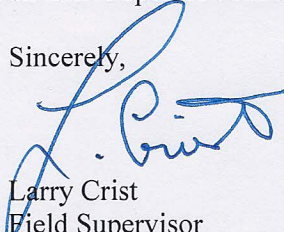
We applaud the effort to restore the native fish community in the Mill Creek watershed that your office and the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (UDWR) are planning on undertaking later this year. Restoring native habitats for sensitive species, such as Bonneville cutthroat trout (*Oncorhynchus clarkii utah*), is an important step to improving the conservation status of at-risk species. Because of partnerships and projects like this, the Bonneville cutthroat trout continues to progress from a species at risk of extinction to a species that is stable in many parts of its historic range.

As you know, sustainable populations of Bonneville cutthroat trout were historically found, but are no longer present, in many streams in the Wasatch Mountains. Unfortunately, the potential to restore native fishes to many of these streams is limited because of technical and logistical reasons. However, your office has demonstrated that the upper portions of Mill Creek (above the fee station) are an ideal location for native fish restoration. For example, existing barriers will assist in the restoration process and protect the conservation population from future upstream invasion by non-native species. We believe that the project is well-planned and well-researched, and as a result will be a great success.

We would also like to stress the importance that the restoration project in Mill Creek will have on community support of native fish restoration. A project of this nature taking place in a heavily used recreation area near Salt Lake City provides substantial outreach possibilities to the community. Your partners, Trout Unlimited and the Boy Scouts of America, see the value that this project can have in educating citizens of the importance of native fish conservation.

To summarize, we support removing non-native trout and stocking a genetically pure conservation population of Bonneville cutthroat trout (and other native species) in the Mill Creek watershed. We believe it will produce a substantial conservation benefit to Bonneville cutthroat trout and the local community. Thank you for your diligent work on native species conservation.

Sincerely,


Larry Crist
Field Supervisor